

# PEACE NEWS

No. 231

NOVEMBER 15, 1940

2d.

## THIS YEAR NEXT YEAR . . .

NOT many hearts in London or Birmingham or Merseyside can have been gladdened by Mr. Churchill's statement that the problem of the war was to provide the tonnage in 1943 and 1944 "for the movement of the considerable armies which will certainly be required in those years if the enemy do not surrender or collapse meanwhile." Three or four more years of the existence which men and women in the great cities are leading now, with the hardships steadily increasing, is a grim prospect for those who do not have the distraction of running the show. And even these might meet with disappointments. For we are almost minded to prophesy that if the war should last three or four more years, the National Government will have collapsed meanwhile.

But we do not believe it will last so long. It will become more and more apparent that the aim of a reconquest of Europe by a land-offensive (which is the basis of Mr. Churchill's prognostications) is illusory. Europe is not going to be starved out or reduced to such a pitch of exhaustion and disorganization that an expeditionary force of a million or two will have a walk-over. True, we are given a propaganda picture of a Europe from which Germany systematically plunders everything above the level of a skin-and-bone existence. But we have only to think a moment to realize that Germany, by doing this, would simply be playing our game; whereas, in fact, Germany is much more interested in appeasing Europe than we are. We may be tolerably certain that Germany will see that the supplies of food in Europe, which are normally sufficient for Europe, are well distributed. The coming winter will be a terrible one locally owing to war-destruction. But thereafter there is no reason to suppose that the food-situation in Europe will be any worse than it will be in the British Isles.

Nor is there any solid prospect of the supply of that vital commodity, oil, falling in Europe. With Rumania and Russia to draw on, Germany will be, in that respect again, as safe as we: for our supply has to come in tankers across the Atlantic—a more vulnerable voyage than that across the Black Sea. And if it is hoped that we shall disorganize the transport of Europe by intensified bombing, Germany has at least equal grounds for counting on the disorganization of transport in Britain. It is concentrated in a much smaller space and is a better target. In the meantime, the German war of attrition against our shipping will continue with a much greater hope of success than in the last war. Her submarine bases on the Atlantic are an ugly reality.

Indeed, Mr. Churchill put it very mildly when he said that "it would not be wise to suppose that a greater stringency has not been brought about, although the actual volume of shipping remains practically undiminished." In fact, the rate of sinking since Germany made effective use of the Atlantic bases has been much higher than that of any possible replacement. The demands on shipping space steadily increase, while the ratio of effective use of existing tonnage decreases. The possibility of having sufficient tonnage to transport and maintain an army big enough to reconquer a Europe that does not want to be reconquered is remote.

A more realistic expectation is that long before 1944 a tremendous war-weariness will have engulfed Europe and Britain alike. The hope of "victory" on either side will fade: for it does not appear likely that, if Britain remains on the defensive, Germany will be able to win a decisive military victory. Not that the positions are equal: our position is certainly more precarious than hers. But probably we shall be able to hang on. The vital difference is that Germany can go

ON Saturday I registered as a "Conscientious Objector"

WRITES

REGINALD REYNOLDS  
WHO EXPLAINS

## *What I shall tell the Tribunal*

It is not my choice of words. I should never use it to describe my position, and in private life I should repudiate it as an absurd description of my views. I object to the expression as a literary atrocity, a snug and sententious mouthful, and an utterly inadequate summary of my position with regard to the war.

I know nothing of the origin of this phrase, except that it was invented by someone in Government circles during the last war, and not by those to whom it was applied. Possibly some truly diabolical mind devised it as a mealy-mouthed term, calculated to bring those who used it into contempt and ridicule. Or maybe it was merely a by-product of bureaucracy, with its singular flair for inelegant and cumbersome language. The astonishing thing, however, is not that Whitehall should have produced such an expression, but that two generations of pacifists should have almost eagerly adopted it as their own.

I registered as a "Conscientious Objector" because that is the only way in which I can make a statement of my

### More Vital Than Ever

OWING mainly to a substantial donation from South Africa, the Fighting Fund is again above the £50 mark this week: £55 6s. 3d., making a total of £801 5s. 5d.

We have also received an offer of £5 conditional upon three more donations of the same amount. Help us to secure this £20. The cause and the need are more vital than ever.

ahead constructively while war continues, whereas we cannot. Another year of war will see the "new order" in Europe much more firmly established than it is today.

This "new order" is represented to be one in which Germany is the highly industrialized centre of a bloc of primary-producing countries; and this is declared to be a system of European hegemony. Yet this was precisely the system which Mr. Joseph Chamberlain proposed for the British Empire in 1903. "There are many things which you do not now make," he said to the Dominions in a famous speech in Glasgow, "many things for which we have a great capacity for production. Leave them to us." Joseph Chamberlain's imperialism and Adolf Hitler's seem in this respect remarkably alike. The snag in the former was capitalism; it may be absent from the latter.

Mr. Churchill's speech, it is said, aroused more criticism in the House of Commons than any of his previous statements. But the criticism, if it may be judged by press reports, was unintelligent. The ominous defect of Mr. Churchill's speech was that it showed no sign of long-term imagination. To talk of the campaign of 1943-44 is not such a sign. Mr. Churchill still sees only the superficies of history in the making. The profound and irreversible processes of change in the modern world escape his view entirely. Instead of thinking of the campaign of 1943-44, he would do well to brood on the condition of Europe and of Britain in those years. We badly need a revolution somewhere. Why not in the mind of Mr. Churchill?

views before a tribunal. I do not recognize the right of any tribunal to judge the state of my conscience, and I shall explain to the tribunal before which I appear that I do so only for our mutual convenience. By appearing I shall give the State an opportunity to do what I regard as the right thing; but if the State, as represented by the tribunal, attempts to coerce me, it will find that it has only caused me inconvenience from which it will not profit in any way. I also believe that such public statements have a propaganda value for our cause.

But when I appear, though I shall take advantage of the legal status of a "Conscientious Objector," I do not intend to plead as such, or to "plead" at all. My business, as I see it, is not to register a mere personal "objection" and to beg for individual immunity from a public "duty."

My "objection" is rooted in an affirmation. My attitude to war is not a separate thing, but integrated in my attitude to life as a whole. To describe such a position as "conscientious objection" has about as much meaning as the description of a missionary in terms of conscientious non-cannibalism.

THE founder of the Society of Friends, into membership of which it was my privilege to be born, described his attitude to war in very positive terms. He lived, he said, in the virtue of that life and power which took away the occasion of all war. This was much more than a mere "objection" to war as a means—it was an affirmation of origins and ends in which war had no place.

For two reasons, however, I would avoid any glib repetition of this famous dictum. Firstly, I consider that such sayings are too easily used in the abstract, unrelated to the realities of life. It took the Society of Friends generations to realize, for example, that slavery could be an "occasion" of war and that the owning of slaves was utterly inconsistent with the "life and power" which they claimed. Hence my second reason for hesitation in using such phrases; for whoever dares assert such things of himself makes a bold claim that very few have the right to make. Perhaps, even, those who have the best right to claim that they "live in the virtue of that life and power" will be the last to do so—like St. Francis, who was a good enough Christian to feel that he had no right to call himself by that name.

On the whole I feel happier on the solid foundations laid by the American Quaker, John Woolman, when he invited his contemporaries to look for "the seeds of war" in their possessions. Acquisitiveness, whether pursued by an individual, a class or a nation, is one of those primary social evils in which war and most other secondary evils have their root. Side by side with the lust for possession, and interwoven with it, is the lust for power.

To repudiate these anti-social lusts and to affirm in their place not merely an "ideal" but an active demand for social justice, individual liberty, and the equal co-operation of free peoples—this is no mere "objection" to war, nor is it a priggish assertion of individual perfection. It is an affirmation of faith and an aspiration for what

might correctly be termed "Peace through Victory" (a fine phrase that, and mis-used). Victory over pride and greed.

Above all, therefore, when I appear before a tribunal, I want to stress, not the incidental fact of my objecting to war, but the revolutionary values from which that objection arises. I am no more content with asserting that I love my neighbour than I am with the bare instruction of the Mosaic law that I am not to kill him.

Jesus took the matter from the negative plane into the positive, but nearly two millennia of Christianity have not brought our duty in this respect from the general to the specific. Christian love has existed, as it were, in a vacuum, and the question of de Lamennais still remains unanswered—"You say that you love your neighbour: what would you do if you hated him?" The less said about love, the better.

TONDAY we reiterate that poignant query in a world that has learnt little since the French mystic first uttered it. It is not we who are on the defensive, and that should be made clear not only before the tribunals, but in every public utterance of those who are opposing the war.

The uneasy conscience of the old order is already apparent, and a good instance of this lies before me as I write. It is an article in the Sunday

(continued at foot of page 2)

### A PACIFIST COMMENTARY

## "He Did His Best"

EDITED BY "OBSERVER"

HE would have been a national hero if Hitler had kept his word." Such was the verdict of my railway carriage—two soldiers, two business men, and an agricultural labourer—on Mr. Neville Chamberlain. The obvious feeling was that he had not been given a square deal. "He did his best," I added sententiously and rather lamely. And that was generally accepted.

How could I attempt to explain to them my conviction that his best was based on absolutely false premises—a complete inability to understand the nature of the decisive forces in the modern world? Anyhow, in that he was no different from the more popular Prime Minister who has replaced him.

### SUNK SHIPPING

WERE one to attempt the impossible task of keeping proportion in the lay-out of these notes, each week's commentary would begin with the figures of shipping sunk by the Germans. Compared with that, everything else in the war-chronicle is a "trivial fond record." Yet how many of us really keep it in the centre of the picture? Naturally, the Government does not encourage us to do so; and the official reports are noticeably inclined to camouflage the situation. Thus the British response to

## A Pacifist Commentary

the German announcement that a whole convoy had been sunk by a surface-raider was, first, that the Admiralty had no intimation of it (which seems improbable) and, second, that "a number of ships"—the number unspecified—had escaped.

Whether these methods of minimizing information are wise, time alone will show. Their riskiness is obvious.

### Pathetic Counterblast

**W**HILE M. Molotov was on his way to Berlin, the emigre Governments of Poland and Czechoslovakia issued a declaration that they are "determined, on the conclusion of this war, to enter as independent and sovereign States into a closer political and economic association which would become the basis of a new order in Central Europe."

The intended counterblast to the German "new order" is evident and pathetic; for it comes twenty years too late. Nazi Germany is, in part, the consequence of the failure of Poland and Czechoslovakia to do, when they had the power, what they are now willing but impotent to do. When the devil was ill . . .

The excesses of their nationalism made impossible the formation of a peaceful federation of democracies in Central Europe. They became the satellites of a policy of encircling Germany which had its origin in the refusal of British democracy to take responsibility for a new European order. France was the linchpin of that insecure and rotten wheel. It has now been taken out.

The ordering of Central Europe for the next period of history depends on the decisions now being taken between Germany and Russia. I do not think Italy will have much say in them.

## REFUSED TO WORK WITH C.O. But Pacifist is Retained

**A** 20-YEAR-OLD conscientious objector was accepted as an ambulance driver at an ARP post at Ryeley, Farningham, Kent. Fourteen other members of the post refused to work with him, according to a report in the *Daily Herald* of November 5.

"We forwarded a protest to the council and were told to take a week's notice," Mr. C. F. Roberts, one of them, said yesterday. "We have no personal axe to grind against the young man. But after a meeting between ourselves we felt we could not work with a CO who, after being excused military service, was earning much more than a serving soldier—£3 5s. a week."

Captain C. S. Bignell, ARP Controller for the Dartford Rural Council, said:—

"I think the men have been misguided. They were not sacked. They resigned. We are keeping the services of the CO and are reorganizing the post. We hope some of the men will return."

### Council Retains COs

The combined efforts of a number of ex-Service men's organizations have failed to move Dagenham Borough Council from their decision to retain the two COs in their employ.

The Council (which is controlled by the Labour Party) had made that decision in June; but at their October meeting they had before them both a petition from the ex-Service organizations against the employment of COs and a letter from the local Peace Pledge Union commanding their "wise and just decision."

The former was referred to the General Purposes Committee which later reported that "the representations do not throw any new light on the matter" which would call for a revision of their policy.

### New "Cat and Mouse" Act

For the CO who has failed to retain his position on the register of COs a new and serious problem has now arisen. Although there has been a widespread release of men who have been imprisoned for refusing to undergo medical examination, without the examination taking place, it appears that they will now be subject to a new kind of "cat and mouse" treatment.

For when some of them have subsequently gone to the Labour Exchange to get work they have been informed that they cannot be registered for employment as they are liable to be arrested at any moment. And in a case reported in the *London Evening*

### Empire, No Empire

**M**R. CHURCHILL'S acid comment on the fact that naval bases on the west coast of Eire are no longer available to us, to combat the submarine menace, pertinently reminds us what a queer construction the British Empire is; for Eire still belongs to it, and the citizens of Eire have the free run of this country. Indeed, most of the hotels and public-houses in London appear to be staffed by them just now.

An empire of which the constituent members can elect to be neutral at will is not an empire in any known sense of the term; it is not even a federation.

At the other extreme of political possibility within this unprecedented "empire" is the infliction of a heavy sentence of four years' rigorous imprisonment on Jawaharlal Nehru for making a speech against India's participation in the war—which is, in his case, an elementary vindication of the right of India to decide her own destiny; for India was declared a belligerent without any pretence of consulting her. Such a sentence on the acknowledged political leader of the younger generation in India is a political blunder of the first order.

### Gesture in India

**P**ERHAPS a mitigation of our supremely unimaginative treatment of India is portended by the withdrawal of the Government order prohibiting the publication of matter calculated to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war.

It was in response to a censorship imposed in virtue of this order on any report of the speech or trial of his disciple Vinoba, that Gandhi suspended the publication of *Harijan*. We may now expect to see that remarkable journal again.

The withdrawal of the order concerning publication seems to indicate that the ban on anti-war speeches will be withdrawn; in which case Nehru will be released very shortly. But, as usual, the gesture will come too late.

### The American Voter

**M**RS. ROOSEVELT has been re-elected; but it is said that the Republicans polled a larger popular vote than any defeated party in any previous Presidential election.

Whether the Republican vote was mainly a vote for isolationism, or against the New Deal, I have no means of knowing. And I doubt whether anybody else has either. But, in my experience, the small business-man in the USA is both isolationist and anti-New Deal. He has an almost religious abhorrence of anything faintly savouring of socialism. No doubt that abhorrence is characteristic of the small business-man everywhere in capitalist democracy; but in the USA it is felt with a quite peculiar fanaticism. State-intervention is regarded as a breach with the American tradition, which is one of equality of opportunity and unmitigated competition.

Indubitably, opportunity is more equal in the USA than it is here: educational opportunity is very much more equal. And the American dream that every one has an equal chance of becoming one of "the big boys on the hill" will take a lot of dissipating.

### America and Capitalism

**I**T is important to realize how deep-rooted and stubborn is the American attachment to unrestricted capitalism: for Mr. Roosevelt is not going to be elected again, and had the Democratic candidate been another than he, the Republicans would certainly have won. That would have made it clearer than it is that America is the great stronghold of capitalism in the modern world.

That is the important point. For it follows that American influence on European affairs will not be quite so salutary as the *New Statesman* believes. Indeed, it would hardly be fantastic to imagine a situation in which the USA imposed a practical veto on any evolution of Britain toward socialism.

On the whole the position of the USA in this war is quite remarkably different from its position in the last. Then American intervention was decisive, morally and militarily. It would be neither today. The Germans have reached a point in their political evolution where they are no longer susceptible to American propaganda for capitalist democracy, and a point in their military campaign where they have no fear of American armies.

### REGINALD REYNOLDS

**T**imes of October 20, entitled "Is Imperialism Criminal?"

Of course, the author (the Marquess of Crewe) reaches the conclusion that it is not. Similar articles once appeared in the English and American press, justifying slavery. What is important is that such articles should come to be written at all. In the hey-day of chattel slavery they were not necessary; and if they now appear in relation to the mass-slavery we call imperialism it is evidence of its decline, of a breaking-down in its morale.

Lord Crewe quotes Rosebery's definition of pride in empire as "the larger patriotism." He does not explain how this "larger patriotism" can be shared by conquered peoples in relation to the conqueror whose country he persists in terming "the Motherland." The patriotism of the underdog, expressed in the form of a demand for independence, he dismisses as "nationalism," and reminds us that "nationalist passion ignores logic"—a defect from which, it would appear, our own "patriotism" is free.

To desire your own freedom is illogical, but to desire your own "freedom" based on the servitude of others is supremely right and reasonable. To such a tangled web does the argument for the old order descend.

## Continued from Page One

### Mr. Priestley

**M**RS. PRIESTLEY has explained in the *News Chronicle* (November 6) that he really did give up his broadcasts of his own free will. He is unequivocal about that. Yet his article breathes disillusion.

Apparently, Mr. Priestley was carried away by the spirit of the national resistance to invasion. "Here," he felt, "was a nation ready to work miracles, not only of defiance and endurance, but also of political, economic, and social creation." But the lead was not given, the promise not made.

When this period came to an end, as it did within these last two or three weeks, and dreary discomfort began taking the place of imminent danger, and the black-out crept toward the afternoon, these millions who had toiled and endured without complaint should have been given their reward. That reward should have been the pledge and passionate assurance of the Government that we were not fighting Hitler in order to return to a state of things that WOULD INEVITABLY PRODUCE MORE HITLERS.

Instead, Mr. Churchill became the leader of the Conservative Party! I hesitate to call so shrewd a Yorkshireman naive; yet I can think of no other word for Mr. Priestley's expectation. Nevertheless, his disillusionment is as significant as his popularity.

### ELTON ON "MORAL DISORDERS"

#### To the Editor

**A**N anonymous correspondent has sent me a marked copy of your sheet for October 18, in which a Mr. Dobson appears to think that I ought not to object to pacifism because I became a peer while Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was Premier of a National Government, and because the late Mr. Clifford Allen became a peer about the same time.

Mr. Dobson might just as well have said that I have no right to be a member of the Church of England because Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was a Scottish Presbyterian; or that, because two other peerages created during Mr. MacDonald's premierships were those of Lord Marx and Lord Horder, I ought to be both a distinguished engineer and a famous doctor.

Mr. MacDonald was not a pacifist in 1934, nor would the country have supported him if he had been. And if Mr. Dobson will consult my *Life of Ramsay MacDonald*, he would discover that Mr. MacDonald was not a pacifist even during the war of 1914-18.

#### ELTON.

Greenways, Old Headington, Oxford.

"Observer" writes:—

Why Lord Elton should call me Mr. Dobson I do not know, but he entirely evades the point of my criticism.

He is entitled to object to pacifism as much as he likes. What he is not entitled to do is to accept a peerage from Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, and then declare that those who "for conscientious or other reasons evaded the posts of danger in the last war" were responsible for the moral disorders of the last twenty years: unless, of course, he wishes me to conclude that his own ennoblement was one of the moral disorders.

As to whether Mr. MacDonald was or was not a pacifist during the last war, I can only say that he was, or claimed to be one, whenever I met him.

## Continued from Page One

**L**ET me conclude with Lord Crewe, because he represents all that stumbling, fumbling confusion upon which we should press home our attack—a line thinly held by bad consciences that awaits even now the coup de grace.

The whole article is an epitome of all the mutually contradictory theses put forward, not only in defence of empire but of capitalism itself, a miniature of the world of ideas we must overcome if peace or justice is to be possible.

When we hear (as Lord Crewe tells us) that the watchword of the British Empire has been "Liberty with Order" we must insistently ask, "Whose order? What liberty? Liberty to act otherwise than God's Englishmen think proper? And if not, what does the word mean?" Such are the questions that must be put to the pious defenders of "democracy" against Fascist "dictatorship."

Finally, let us know once and for all time what the upholders of the old order hold to be the true basis of our civilization. Lord Crewe tells us in one place of imperialism arising from "duty to spread light over the dark places of the earth." He speaks of how our own imperialism "has aided Christian missions and has owed much to them." Yet in another place, speaking of the American granting of in-

dependence to the Philippines (he does not mention the economic reason for this), he tells us that "America would not go to war to save the Philippines if her own interests were not endangered. Why should she?"

There you have it. We can find altruistic reasons for everything we do, from sweating employees to stealing someone else's country; but when the big question, "Are you prepared to fight for this?" is asked, "interest" is the one accepted justification. Not all the gallant talk of helping the weak and fighting for civilization obliterates this fact, that power and acquisitiveness are the true motives of war—the desire for those "great possessions" which once barred a pleasant young man from Christian discipleship . . .

Is imperialism criminal? Is capitalism criminal? Is war criminal? The answers we give to these questions depend upon the values we assert. According to the values of the old order it was a crime to steal the goose from the common but a first step to the peerage to steal the common from the goose.

When I go up before the tribunal I shall tell them that I have, in a manner of speaking, a "conscientious objection" to cannibalism, infanticide, blackmail, and torture, including war. But I hold it my business to make an indictment rather than to answer one.

# Crowd, Committee, Community

By  
**CHARLES RAVEN**

**G**ROUP activity is so obviously vital for a minority movement, and indeed for all corporate life, that it is worth while examining the conditions which determine its value.

Merely to meet together, sharing a common purpose and seeking to express this in common action, does not necessarily produce creative results of a desirable sort: it may only end in boredom or even bestiality. Nothing can be so cruel as a crowd or so futile as a committee.

If our groups do not often produce mass-hysteria it is regrettable that they too frequently produce a sense of irritation and wastage of time.

To examine the psychology of human collectives is a very necessary task for all who are concerned with democracy; for to confuse the crowd, the committee, and the community with one another is to invite disaster.

Its critics identify democracy with the herd, and quite naturally decide that mankind in the mass is bad. Its advocates assume that if, delegates representing different parties and points of view can be gathered together, truth will emerge; and it doesn't: an unholy alliance of chairman and secretary, with a skilfully drawn agenda, may secure the acceptance of the "official" opinion; or a compromise, satisfactory to nobody because only a highest common factor, may be struck; or one party may triumph and the rest go away rebellious.

Long experience of crowds and committees inevitably leads to the belief that if man is moral, society is immoral, and that the wisdom of a group's decisions is in inverse proportion to the number of wise men taking part in it.

## GROUP INTO MOB

We all know the crowd; and as the herd-instinct is part of our heritage we all enjoy it. Bring a few hundred people together, set them singing or shouting, confront them with a practised speaker, and in a few minutes they are mesmerized. Their critical faculties, their hard-won restraints, even their powers of thought are gleefully inhibited and they cease to be human in any true sense.

Propaganda and advertisement aim at the same result and attain it. The group becomes a mob—even at a pacifist meeting. The real danger of totalitarianism is not peculiar to Fascist or Nazi societies. Democracies may be equally blind and beast-like.

The committee is less obviously evil. Its members have at least a common objective, a subject that draws them together, and a special interest in and knowledge of their programme.

But they too often come committed to a fixed line of action: "This is my solution of our problem; it is the right one: if you won't accept it, at least I will do my best to enforce it on you: if I can't have my way, you sha'n't have yours." They come for a dog-fight; and, amusing as this may be, it is creative of nothing but wounds and a cessation of hostilities.

A debating society and a counting of votes never yet resulted in truly creative action. The whole tone and temper of the proceedings nullifies the possibility of new discoveries of synthetic thinking.

## A Vintage Week-end!

NORTHAMPTON REGION

STUART D. MORRIS & WILFRED WELLOCK

Saturday Afternoon, November 30

Sunday, December 1, 8.30 Breakfast

Hospitality:

Apply immediately, W. S. Seaward,  
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## GROUP NOTES

### Twos and Threes Who Gather Together

NEWS, particularly of East Anglian groups, tells of need among CO members, the scattering of some for various reasons, but the undespering efforts, in however small a way, of the twos or threes who still gather together.

Bury St. Edmunds members, for example, meet weekly at different homes, finding great help and fellowship together. They have a number of COs who will soon be in need.

Active members in Colchester number as many as thirty, and many meet weekly with the FoR. They have a CO relief fund, and they sell 15 copies of Peace News in the town every week.

Most of the Clacton group are evacuated or are COs who have gone away to do land work, but the remaining members keep in touch. Two who are living together run a self-denial box for the PPU.

The secretary of the Sudbury (Suffolk) Group, Mr. Tricker, who is a teacher, got complete exemption at his tribunal, but there has been a great controversy locally over pacifist teachers. The Education Committee's decision to sack them was held up a month by a letter of protest from the local Free Church Council. Three members have been refused by the Red Cross organization in the town.

### IN LIVERPOOL CAMP

One of the Lileston members, Philip Smith, was reported in October to be at the Liverpool training camp at which some COs given non-combatant duties are alleged to have been brutally treated. The remaining members are few and scattered, but meet monthly.

The Leeds and district monthly bulletin, Peaceward, also refers to a member who was at Liverpool, and reports that the group decided to protest to sympathetic MPs "against the inhuman treatment meted out to Leslie Worth and his fellow COs."

### PEOPLE'S CONVENTION

The Hull Group now meets every Saturday at the Peace Shop at 2.45 p.m., but the assistant secretary, R. W. Huzzard, reports that of the 120 members known to them "very few are active, and we have the utmost difficulty in getting decent attendances at meetings; pacifists in Hull will only come to listen to well-known figures."

At a group meeting on November 2 the following resolution was agreed to: "That the Hull PPU wishes to know the attitude of PPU headquarters towards the 'People's Convention'. Whilst, as pacifists, we realize that we cannot endorse all the six points, we wish to know if the pacifist movement could co-operate on the issues with which we agree and help to work for a People's Government and a People's Peace, whilst still maintaining our pacifist position and endeavouring to convert those with whom we co-operate."

### CHRISTMAS BULLETIN

The Northampton Region is producing a special Christmas number of its monthly bulletin, The Regional News, it will be attractively produced and will contain eight pages. Stuart Morris, Middleton Murry, and Vera Brittain are contributing messages or articles.

The Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Leicester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Derby and Stoke-on-Trent

### In Memoriam— Basil Martin

By JOHN BARCLAY

WE live in uncouth times. Without discrimination the bombs on both sides fall on the just and the unjust. Beautiful and priceless treasures that can never be replaced are destroyed as often as slums, which are the product of ugly souls. As the pitiless business goes on and the misery of winter settles down, it is difficult to summon up the energy and faith needed to keep our heads above the rising flood of hate and fear. The courage needed is of a rare quality and seldom found on the surface.

It is only when a saint dies that we realize our loss and find that we have been depending on him for much of our inspiration and personal bravery. So was it when Dick Sheppard and George Lansbury passed on and for many of us life became much more difficult. Now comes the news of the death of a less known pacifist, Basil Martin.

To him I owe my early inspiration, and older members of the Adult School Movement will echo my sorrow. His strength lay in his gentleness, but his courage was superlative. As a Congregational minister he spoke out fearlessly against the Boer War in Hereford market place and had to face an angry mob who stoned his windows. During the four years of the last war he suffered complete ostracism as an unrepentant pacifist. Last week he died, aged 82, one of the great host of saints whose personal witness makes our own faith possible.

**Evacuation.**—North Wales is full of Londoners, and our groups there are feeling the stirring of new blood. It is one of the paradoxes of the present time that we in the centre lose our best helpers and then gain strength by the loss. Bangor, Colwyn Bay, and Wrexham, which I visited last week, are all fortunate in this way, and students and civil servants who are in that area should let me know and I will put them in touch.

Evacuation is perhaps a blessing—very much in disguise—but nevertheless in some cases a blessing.

(Will groups please send any news of their activities to John Barclay at 6, Endsleigh Street, W.C.1.—Ed.)

Regions are specially requested to send short reports of recent PPU activities and forthcoming plans in their districts. These should be limited to 150 words. Groups or regions in other Midland or nearby centres are also invited to send reports, and as many as possible will be included. The price will be 2d. per copy and all profits will go to the Peace News Fighting Fund. It is hoped that all Midland and nearby groups will generously support this venture by ordering at least one or two dozen copies for sale to their members. All reports and orders should be sent to J. M. R. Studholme, 24, High Street, Ollney, Bucks, and should reach him not later than Thursday, November 25. If possible payment should be sent with orders. The special number should be ready by December 15.

A part-time Pacifist Service Unit has been started in Blackheath, and the secretaries (Alan and Winifred Eden-Green, 2, Talbot Place, S.E.3) are very anxious to hear from any who can give some of their spare time to it. A Group Relief Fund has also been started, of which it is proposed to use 75 per cent. for distressed COs, retaining 25 per cent. for emergencies. The group now meets at 3 p.m. on the first and third Sundays in the month at the secretaries' address.

## CONSCRIPTION IN U.S.A.

THE interested, not to say inspired, publicity campaign that accompanied—in this country as well as in the United States—the long-drawn-out introduction of conscription for Americans successfully obscured a good deal of the truth behind its introduction. The Christian Century (Chicago) of September 25 brings out some facts that will be news to many people in this country.

Mr. Roosevelt, who did not give the Burke-Wadsworth Conscription Bill specific endorsement for weeks after it had come before Congress, suddenly demanded that it be passed immediately. The publicity actually confused many people into thinking the measure was law even before the Senate had debated it; but when it became evident that there was a body of opposition in the Senate, letters supporting that opposition began to pour in.

Numerous religious meetings were held, and radio addresses given, and the religious press "showed a unanimity of opposition seldom achieved on any issue." But Mr. Wendell Willkie, the Republican leader, joined the President in demanding passage of the Bill, and "skillful manipulation of the psychology

of emergency" helped to get it passed by about two to one in each house.

### POSITION OF COs

The Act makes better provision for conscientious objectors than did the 1917 Selective Service Act—"thanks to the work of Quakers and others in Washington while the Bill was under discussion."

It allows for exemption from military service for anyone who "by reason of religious training and belief is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form." Such men may be assigned to non-combatant service or to work of national importance under civilian direction. There will be both local and appeal boards for the hearing of such claims. The Act does not, however, recognize the rights of conscience of non-religious objectors, nor does it allow for "unconditional exemption."

In response to requests from many religious groups, the American Friends Service Committee had already arranged to extend its Work Camps scheme so as to provide for more young men and women an alternative to war work. They have set up a National Volunteer Service, applicants for which must agree to serve anywhere, at any task assigned to them, for a full year and, if possible, to pay their own expenses.

It remains to be seen how far such work will be admitted as "work of national importance under civilian direction."

November 15, 1940

**Circulation Notes****THE SPIRIT THAT WILL WIN**

By John W. Cowling

**W**E have not had such intensive raids these last few days—fortunately, otherwise there would not be much of the centre of \_\_\_\_\_ left.

"Will you please increase our standing order by 12 making a total of 732 . . ."

These two consecutive sentences, taken from a letter we received last week from a certain city—I'd better not say where—are a reflection of the spirit which will enable Peace News to triumph over the obstacles placed in its way by the wholesale newsagents' ban and by air raids.

**AN INSPIRATION**

Mr. Neville Chamberlain said not long ago that he knew we should never get a 100 per cent effort by workers in the factories until the bombs started to drop. Though we are not so callous as to welcome any relationship between bomb-dropping and the activity of our supporters, we cannot but be inspired by the way in which many PPU groups are facing difficulties as a challenge.

In all parts of the country the blackout and other tedious restrictions are certainly a nuisance; but need we let them curb activity if, elsewhere, heavy air-raids have failed to prevent our supporters from carrying on the good work?

**Conditions in Our Colonies**

**B**ehind God's Back. By Negley Farson. Gollancz. 10s. 6d.

The duty, which we so generally neglect, of knowing what goes on in our colonial empire, and in those mandated territories for which we are responsible, is neither an easy nor a pleasant one. Yet there can be no question that we ought to know a great deal more than we do as to how far, under British administration, the natives of Africa are being secured in, or defrauded of, their rights in the land of their fathers.

And now here comes a book in which the duty is made pleasant by the ability of the author to describe vividly the countries through which he passed, the lives, customs, and industries of the natives, and to make real for us the character, good and bad, of the individuals he encountered on his adventurous journey across Equatorial Africa from Tanganyika to Nigeria. Accompanied only by his wife, in a Ford car with springs constantly requiring to be renewed, Negley Farson (American journalist) romped across Africa in the most reckless and haphazard way imaginable.

But though adventurously rash, what he tells of the things that go on "behind God's back" shows that he has not only a remarkably observant eye, but a keen and discerning mind, in which one has the more confidence because it is by no means one-sided; and though his sympathies are very much with the native, he gives high praise to the British Administration in two at least of the colonies he visited, and even, over the scientifically-devised exploitation of native labour in the Belgian Congo, admits that it had certain good results as regards standard of living, health, and development of native ability in skilled trades—trades which in some of the British-controlled territories they are not allowed to practise.

He is frankly pro-British, and rather anti-Indian; but he more than once gives points to Germans and Italians who are genuine colonists, and not merely the employees of big business combines whose sole object is exploitation and the securing of foreign markets. His main charge against us is that we have really ceased to be a colonizing people; and when we are not true colonists we do not treat the natives so well. He says also that where good land has been reserved for the use of the natives the English are the worst land-grabbers, ever wanting to oust them. Of that, Kenya is a flagrant example; but in mandated Tanganyika the interests of the natives are properly protected, and their standard of life, industry, and happiness is proportionately higher. Also, of the British colonial officials in Uganda, he says:

. . . Working in a purely native State, unimpeded by white settlers' demands, they have an administrative laboratory in which they have made their work a model for the rest of Africa . . . Compared to Kenya, Uganda is a paradise for the natives.

And he tells how, when the Commission for Closer Union in East Africa met at Whitehall, to promote, in the white man's interest, the fusion of Kenya, Tanganyika, and Uganda, the native representative from Uganda, opposing it with all his might, said "Uganda does not wish to become a horse in the Kenya stable."

"Whenever you read in your London paper," says the author, "that a big commercial company has been formed, or an existing one has just embarked on a programme 'which will be best for the native,' you may look up the definition of just one word in the dictionary: hypocrisy."

I. H.

**H**AVING examined the view that if the reconquest of Europe proves impossible by means of war "Christianity and civilization would perish from Europe" and suggested that, in view of the contrary experience over a long period of history, "there is good reason to hope for a similar outcome in the future,"

**S**TEPHEN HOBHOUSE ends his article on

**If the Dictators Hold Europe**

**T**HERE are, I think, only two serious grounds for pessimism.

Firstly, for obvious reasons, the situation is of extreme urgency; and it certainly looks as if, unless there is an early and widespread refusal, at least with one nation for a start, to make use of the weapons of modern war that are ready for use—unless there occurs some much quicker change of mind than has usually happened, the havoc of total war will create a condition of total ruin which, at the least, it will take centuries to repair.

Secondly, there remains by far the most powerful argument that can in the present juncture be advanced against the pacifist view and against the assurance that the hopeful processes of the past (as described in earlier paragraphs) will repeat themselves, so that in due course the higher culture and ideals of the subjected or enslaved communities will prevail over the ignorance and brutality of the conqueror.

Today, the groups of totalitarian dictators—Nazis, Fascists, or Communists—seizing on the devices of applied science, have elaborated a diabolically ingenious and all-prevailing technique—by the comprehensive control of the printing press, the radio, the cinema; by their schools and their bureaucrats, through which they believe, with considerable show of reason, that they can convince the vast majority of the rising generation and can hypnotize them permanently into accepting their own way of life, their atheism and materialism, their worship of Race or of State, their perversions of morality, justice, historical truth, and artistic beauty (I ignore, for the sake of argument, the good elements, as I conceive them to be, of the totalitarian regimes).

There is a very deep and genuine fear that, in this altogether unprecedented way, the standards of true culture will completely perish from the lands under Nazi or totalitarian rule and ultimately perhaps from the earth, unless the peoples still relatively free can smash up the whole pernicious system by the might of external violence and of countering propaganda.

**GROUNDS FOR PESSIMISM**

Now here, unless a more confident answer than I am aware of can be framed from the findings of psychology, the grounds for pessimism for those whose religious faith is "agnostic" or "rationalist" are strong, for the situation is new and threatening, and, humanly speaking, the plans of the dictators appear to be so comprehensive and penetrating as to be assured of permanent success as a method of mental and moral enslavement.

Nevertheless . . . but here I will first interject that the situation would not be without historical precedent of a kind, in so far as there have been earlier cultures in which the enslavement of body and soul appears to have been equally complete.

Sociologists tell us that the members of most primitive tribes have been embedded to an almost unbelievable extent in the "cake of custom," the intricate system of totem, tabu, ritual, etc., from which the individual could not swerve without the practical certainty of violent death or starvation. Something of the same kind has persisted into modern times in the rigid caste regulations of India. But in spite of it all individuals have broken away from such social tyrannies, and the seeds of freedom have been sown.

Moreover, the mediaeval Catholic Church, that strange mixture of truth and error, claimed, like some other ecclesiastical systems, almost absolute control of its members, body, mind, and soul, to its faithful servants it promised earthly comforts and heavenly rewards, while it held over the disobedient and non-conforming the direct pains and penalties both in this life and the next.

Yet that Church was constantly honey-combed with heretics who dared to doubt and to assert at their deadly

peril the inviolable freedom of the human spirit. Today, the new tyranny of the spirit is of a flimsier and more artificial texture and it follows on an era of comparative freedom; and so, even without external stimulus, we may expect a much greater tendency to revolt, especially among the ranks of the naturally generous-minded youths and maidens of every race.

**A PASSING PHASE**

Apart, however, from all human precedent, for those of us who are convinced Christians and for all, whether Christians or no, who believe that the spirit of each human child is a portion of a universal spirit of good will and freedom that sustains all things, it is impossible to contemplate the prospect of anything more than a partial and transient enslavement of a nation or continent, any more than we can despair over the threatened ruin of universal war.

There seems, indeed, to be actual evidence that in Russia, after 23 years of ruthless persecution and anti-God propaganda, the Christian community is not only surviving, but, having purified itself of much corruption and shaken itself free from the revengeful spirit and from methods of violence, is beginning to exert an influence for good upon the rank and file of its atheistic rulers. Apart from such an example, and similar hopeful signs among German Christians, it must be certain that no system of nurture, education, and propaganda, however elaborate and subtle, however Satanic, can be secure against the essential, the divine nature of man, as an aspiring, believing, praying, loving creature, bound by his roots to the central heart of all things.

Moreover (I quote, not from my own Bible, but from the Hindu Gita, the Bible of Gandhi), "when righteousness decays and disorder prevails, God manifests himself from time to time, to liberate the oppressed and to establish the reign of justice."

**UNTIRING PATIENCE**

True it is that, in a world of sin and error, such a faith has need of an untiring patience; it must not be cast down by the thought of long years of comparative darkness and enslavement, such as we can see as we look back over the sad vistas of human history. There are no short cuts to freedom to be obtained by organized violence, national or revolutionary.

Time, though it often seems to our imprisoned spirits so intolerably wearisome and endless, is a relatively unimportant feature of our existence. The promise, the certainty of future freedom and happiness lies buried in the confused and tragic present.

Dictators and their crude handiwork will wither away, millions of their subjects will pass through the mysterious veil of death before the hour of liberation comes; but the unconquerable element in the human spirit, humble, forgiving, receptive, remains; and that, and not the massed machinery of organized wealth and organized destruction, is the rock on which the future of our race is built secure.

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CHRISTIAN PACIFIST, 28, conditional exemption, M.A., lay preacher, secretarial experience, desires work of service—social, religious, or in connection with food production. Box 587, Peace News, 3, Blackstock Rd., N.4.

SPANISH LADY urgently needs employment as needlewoman, companion-help, or matron to children's home; 24 years PPU Basque colony; 4 months children's hospital; more than 20 miles from coast. Read, Oaks, Langham, Colchester.

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